



State of California
Respiratory Care Board
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Inquiry: What is the stance of the RCB on the procedure of Neonatal Respiratory Therapist administering antibiotic ointment to the eyes of newborns in Labor and Delivery as part of their job while attending the delivery. I need a specific remark on whether, as part of their responsibilities in the L&D area, they can provide this procedure.

Response: It is our assessment that the function you inquired about would be classified as follows:

Administration of antibiotic ointment to newborn eyes: Classification 1B

(Not verbatim from the Respiratory Care Practice Act but, in the Respiratory Care Board's judgment, highly inferred and allowed.)

In addition to the classification listed above, the intent of the practice act recognizes the existence of overlapping functions between physicians and surgeons, registered nurses, physical therapist, respiratory care practitioners, and other licensed health care personnel (3701, Article 1, General Provisions). As such, the onus is on the licensed health facility to develop appropriate training and competencies that would provide this function in a manner that would be safe when administered to the public.

Reference # 2001-C-40